



By the King.

A Proclamation for restraint of killing, dressing,
and eating of Flesh in Lent, or on Fish dayes, appointed by the Law, to be
hereafter strictly obserued by all sorts of people.



Whereas, for the benefit and commoditie of this Our Realme of England, as well in the maintenance of Our Hauie and Shipping (a principall strength of this Island) as for the sparing and increase of Flesh victuall, diuers good Lawes and Statutes haue bene provided, for the due obseruation of Lent, and other dayes appointed for Fish dayes, which from time to time haue bene seconded and quickened by sundry Our Proclamations, and other Actes and Ordinances of State: And whereas, notwithstanding the many good provisions heretofore had and made in that kinde, wee yett see the inordinate liberty now vsually taken by all sorts of people, to kill, dresse, and eat Flesh in the Lent season, and on other dayes and times prohibited by Law, is become an euill of such inueterate growth, as it requireth more then ordinary care to suppress the same:

Wee therefore much affecting the Reformation of this so great an euill (and enemy to the plenty of Our Kingdomes) haue thought fit elssoones (and that thus timely, the better to take away the excuse, and to prevent the provisions of Flesh that vsually men make against the Lent season) To expresse Our selfe and Our Royall Commandement in this behalfe: wherein without any future declaration of Our pleasure in this kind, we shall expect and require from all Our Subjects, that due notice be taken, and that a strict and continued obedience and conformity be yeldded thereunto in all succeeding times.

And therefore wee doe straitly Charge and Command all and euery person and persons whatsoever, to whom it may appertaine, carefully to provide and see, that these Orders following may be duly obserued and put in execution, vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and such penalties as by the Lawes of this Our Realme may be inflicted vpon the offenders for their contempt or neglect of Us and Our Lawes, whereof we shall shew Our selues most sensible.

And first, whereas we find that the chiefeest cause of these disorders hath growen from the Licences that haue bin granted to Butchers to kill and vtter flesh contrary to Law, and that by Our Lawes no Mayor, Justice of Peace, or other person of what degree or quality soeuer, can grant any Licence in this kind, And that the Lords and others of Our Priue Councell, doe by Our direction forbear to grant the same, or to giue way thereto; Our Will and pleasure is vpon the penalties provided by Law, and such further punishment to be inflicted vpon the offenders, as shall be thought meet, that no such Licence shall be graunted for the killing or vttering of Flesh, And that no Butcher or other person whatsoever, doe by colour thereof, kill, vtter, or put to sale, any flesh contrary to the Lawes established and provided in that behalfe.

And for the auoiding of such inconueniences hereafter, Our Will and pleasure is, That the Lord Mayor of Our City of London, and euery other Officer & Justice of Peace, shall call before them, and send for any of the seruants of any Inholders, Victuallers, Cookes, Alehousekeepers, Tauerneers, and keepers of Ordinary Tables, and such others that vtter Victualles, and to examine them vpon their corporall Oathes, what Flesh is, or hath bene during the Lent season, or other dayes prohibited by the Law, dressed, killed, vttered, or eaten in their houses, which if they shall refuse to doe, then to commit to prison the said seruants so refusing vpon their Oathes to declare the truth.

That the Lord Maior shall also yeerely before Lent, or at the beginning thereof, cause all Inholders, Keepers of Ordinary Tables, Victuallers, Alehousekeepers, and Taverners within the City and Liberties thereof, to appeare before him, or such person as hee shall appoint meet for that purpose; And shall take Recognizances with sufficient Sureties of euery of them in good summes of money (viz.) one hundred pounds of the Principall, and their Sureties thirtie pounds apiece, to Our vse, not to dresse any Flesh in their houses in the Lent time, or at any other times prohibited for any respect, nor suffer it to be eaten contrary to the Law. The like Recognizance with Sureties, shall be taken of the like parties vpon like penalties, by the Iustices of Peace of Our City of Westminster, and the Liberties thereof. And euery of the said Recognizances to be certified into Our Exchequer.

And for the Butchers and others that come with victuall of Flesh out of the Countrey to the City, Our pleasure is, That the Lord Maior shall cause certaine persons to watch at the Gates and other like places in the Suburbs, where Flesh may bee brought, to view and search, and to intercept the same: and if any of those Watchmen shall be found negligent and corrupt in his Charge, then hee to be committed to prison during the whole Lent.

And to the end that Fishermen may imploy themselves to Sea with better encouragement then heretofore, and that the Fishmongers may furnish themselves with such store from time to time hereafter, as shall be expedient, as well for the provision of the Citie, as for selling the same at reasonable Rates; Wee will that they take notice of this Our Commandement and constant resolution for the obseruance of Lent, and Fish-dayes, both now and hereafter, as by Law is required.

And furthermore, as we thinke it fit that euery man should be a rule of order and abstinence in his owne house, as well in respect of the publique, as of his priuate ease and benefit, So wee straightly charge and command all Inholders, Keepers of Ordinary Tables, Victuallers, Alehousekeepers, and Taverners, not to make any Supper for any person or persons whatsoever vpon Friday nights, either in Lent or out of Lent; nor to suffer any meat to be then drested, vttered, sold or eaten in their houses, vpon paine of such punishment as is due to those that shall contemne Our Royall pleasure and Commandement.

And forasmuch as vpon further aduice and consideration had, that the restraint of killing and dresting of Flesh is no sufficient remedy for the mischief, vntlesse there be better care taken also to suppress the vnlawfull and inordinate eating of flesh in the time of Lent, and on other dayes and times prohibited, wherewith Our Subjects haue accustomed themselves rather for delicacy then for necessity; It is therefore Our Royall Will and pleasure, and accordingly we doe hereby straightly prohibit and forbid all Our Subjects of what degree or quality soeuer within this Our Realme, to eat any manner of flesh in the time of Lent, or on other dayes now vusually obserued as Fish-dayes, without a speciall Licence first obtained from the Bishop of the Diocesse, or such other as by the Law haue power to giue Licence in that behalfe, (which we will and command shall be sparingly granted, and in cases of necessity onely) vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and to be proceeded against by Our Attourney Generall in Our Court of Starre Chamber, as contemners of Our Royall Commandement, and vpon such further penaltie as by the Lawes and Statutes of Our Realme may be inflicted on those as shall wilfully offend in this kinde.

And as these Orders are to be executed in the City of London, and places neere to the same, So is Our expresse Pleasure and Commandement, That Our Iustices of Peace in all Shires within their Rule, and all other Maiors, Bayliffes, and chiefe Officers in Townes corporate, or in any Liberties within their Precincts, shall cause the same to be obserued and performed in like manner; and that no manner of Toleration, Favour, or Connivencie be vled by any Iustice of Peace, or other Officer, contrary to the true meaning of this Our Proclamation, as both they that shall presume wittingly so to tolerate the offence, as also the party himselve offending, will answer the same at their vttermost perils: Our Commandement being, That Our Lawes in this case shall bee hereafter severely executed vpon all offenders whatsoever.

Further charging and commanding the Lord Maior of Our City of London, the Iustices of Assize in their seuerall Circuits, the Maiors and chiefe Officers of all other Cities and Townes corporate, Iustices of Peace, Lords of Liberties, and all other Officers and Ministers within the seuerall Counties of this Our Realme, That they and euery of them fully obey this Our pleasure, and cause and compell the same to be obeyed and executed by others, as they will answer the contrary at their vttermost perils.

And for the due execution of the premisses in all other the Counties of this Our Realme, as well as in Our Cities of London and Westminster, we doe hereby straightly Charge and Command all Our Iustices of Peace within the same Counties, as well within Liberties as without, That yeerely and euery yeere hereafter before Lent, they cause to come and appeare before them all Inholders,

Cookes, Tauerneers, Alehousekeepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers whatsoever, and to require and take of them to Our vse, severall Recognizances, with Sureties, for obseruation of the premisses, (viz.) The principals in ten pounds, and their two Sureties in five pounds apiece: And if they shall refuse or neglect to enter into such Recognizances, That then the sayd Justices shall suppress such persons so refusing, from Victualling any more, and shall also cause them forthwith to become bound by Recognizance with Sureties to Our vse, (viz.) The principals in twenty pounds, and their two Sureties in ten pounds apiece, not to Victuall or sell Beere or Ale from thenceforth; which if they shall refuse to doe, then the sayd Justices to commit to prison all such persons so refusing to enter into such Recognizance, vntill they shall submit themselves, and become bound, as aforesaid. And further for all such Inholders, Cookes, Tauerneers, Alehousekeepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers as shall not appeare before the sayd Justices, as aforesaid, That they immediatly send forth their Warrants, or grant Prozesse against them and enery of them so making default, to appeare and answer their contempt at the next generall Sessions of the Peace.

And further for the more due punishment of Inholders, Keepers of ordinary Tables, Cookes, Butchers, Victuallers, Alehousekeepers, Tauerneers, and such like, who shall forfeit their Recognizances by killing or dressing of flesh, or suffering it to be eaten in their houses in the Lent time, and other Fish-daves; And to the end that the same may be as well taken in due forme of Law, as duely certified into Our Exchequer, We doe will and require all Justices of Peace, as well within Liberties as without, That at such times as they shall meet within their severall Diuisions, for the taking of such Recognizances, that they giue notice to the Clerkes of the Peace, or their Deputies, to attend them for that purpose. Of whom wee will require a strict Accompt for the Legall taking and returning of the same Recognizances into Our sayd Exchequer: The sayd Clerkes of the Peace and their Deputies, taking for the making and certifying of the same Recognizances of all Inne-keepers, Tauerneers, Cooks and Butchers, the Fee of two shillings six pence; And of all Alehousekeepers the Fee of twelue pence; as limited to be taken by the Clerke of the Peace for Our County of Middlesex for every such Recognizance, and no more.

And lastly, for that the Fishmongers (vpon the obseruation of the aforesayd Orders) may perhaps take occasion thereby to enhance the prices, as well of fresh as of Sea fish; wee doe therefore heereby further charge and command all Fishmongers whatsoever, That they sell and utter their Fish at moderate and vsuall Rates and prices: And that all Justices of Peace, Maiors, Bailiffes, and other Our Officers as well within Liberties as without, to whom it shall appertaine, shall from time to time take such order with the sayd Fishmongers, that our Subjects bee not grieved by any such enhancement or encrease of prices vpon fish, vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and such further punishment as may be inflicted vpon them by Our Lawes.

Giuen at Whitehall the thirtieth day of Ianuary, in the twentieth yeere of Our Reigne of Great Britaine, France and Ireland.

God saue the King.

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